

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

An apparatus and method for selectively encrypting portions of data sent over a network between a server and a client. The apparatus includes parsing means for separating a first portion of the data from a second portion of the data, encrypting
5 means for encrypting only of the first portion of the data, and combining means for combining the encrypted first portion of the data with the second portion of the data, wherein the second portion of the data is not encrypted. The apparatus further includes decrypting means installed at the client for decrypting the encrypted portion of the data. The apparatus is platform independent in terms of media format and data
10 protocol. The encryption unit encrypts data transparently to the client based on the media format. The apparatus of the invention is implemented as one of an application and a plug-in object. The method for selectively encrypting portions of data which differ from each other in at least one characteristic sent over a network between a server and a client includes parsing the data into a first and second portion, encrypting
15 only the first portion of the data, and sending the encrypted first portion and the second portion of the data over the network to the client. The method further includes receiving data from the server, determining whether a data stream is established between the server and the client, and negotiating an encryption key with a decryption shim of the client.